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Tippets, Tapers & Tales

February 1, 2013

President's Message

Greetings:

Things are busy and seem to be getting busier. To start we had a lively discussion with two Ingham County Conservation Officers regarding Riparian Rights and a host of other issues about fishing and access to rivers at our regular meeting last month at the Okemos Library. There was also a lot of discussion about hunting and trespass. Several members were very complimentary about the content and exchange at this meeting. I hope you all remember that when we have a clinker some time. So far no presenter has cancelled or not shown (knock on wood).

Then on January 16 several club members participated in

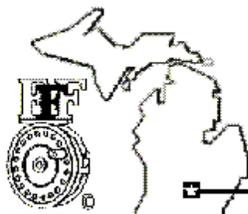
a fly tying training for Cub Scouts in Holt. Special thanks go to Mark Noel for organizing this activity. He did a great job. Further thanks go to Mark Johnson, John Ross, Mark Johnston, Bob Ceru, Dale Ruprecht, Bob Bawden and Terry Greiner for their excellent assistance. The program was very well received and the club was provided some treats for our upcoming meetings. Watch for chocolate covered treats at the next couple of meetings and popcorn in our monthly raffles compliments of the Cub Scouts.

On January 26th & 27th several of us participated in the Mid-Michigan Fishing and Sports show out at the Ingham County Fairgrounds. That should bring back some



memories! Thanks once again to Mark Johnson for organizing the volunteers and getting our stuff to our booth. Thank you to our volunteers: Mark Johnson, Mark Johnston, Bob Ceru, Bob Bawden, Terry Greiner, Herb Drake, Steve Arnoczky and Steve's wife Brenda. There was not a lot of traffic, but we were able to sell 57 Raffle Tickets, perhaps attract some new members and build a little goodwill.

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RED CEDAR FLY FISHERS

Okemos, Michigan

1981 McKenzie Cup Winners

The Red Cedar Fly Fishers is a Charter Club of the Federation of Fly Fishers.

It's purpose is to promote fly-fishing through Education, Restoration and Conservation

President's Message Continued

Our program for February 12th will feature Frank Willet of the Pier Marquette Lodge or if Frank can't make it he will send some staff. By the way that meeting will be at, hopefully, our new permanent home at the Michigan State University Natural Resources Building in room #1. I believe the Building is located at Farm Lane and Trowbridge. There should be available free parking next to the building. Thanks to Bob Bawden for pursuing the use of this facility. Of course you will let me know what you think.

The Banquet is confirmed at Eagle Eye Golf Club on May 14th, but we are still looking for a program that might appeal to a wider audience. My goal is to fill that room with 80 people. Please let me know if you have any ideas. I promise we will follow up on them. Although, the raffle is taking shape, it would still be nice to have someone coordinate the raffle. Let me know if you can help. We could also use someone to coordinate the sale of raffle tickets.

John Hesse who has spoken

at one of our meetings has asked if anyone is interested in helping with the Steel headers youth fishing program on May 4th, 11th and 18th. Let me know if you are interested. We will have a more formal sign up as those dates approach. He is also very interested in incorporating fly casting in the 4-H Club youth fishing class on Jun 19th – 21st. The Project Fish people are also interested in our help. In keeping with some of my goals this year I am hoping we will increase our work with youth as that may be the key to the survival and prospering of our sport. It is also pretty awarding to see how interested some of these kids get, like those kids at the Cub Scout Tying Night.

Phil Stevens is once again coordinating our participation for the Quiet Water Symposium on March 2 at the MSU Pavilion. He already has a number of volunteers lined up, but if you wish to participate you can show up and tie flies or help sell some raffle tickets or just recruit some new members. We will also need some volunteers for the Midwest Fly Fishing Show at Macomb Community Col-

lege on March 9th and 10th. If you would like to help out, we will have a sign-up sheet at the February meeting. As you can see there are many ways to help out. If you could participate in just one activity that would be great!

Finally, you will soon be getting a roster. Some of you have not paid your dues for this year and I am well aware that some persons who receive this newsletter may not pay dues and that's OK. However, if you could pay, please help us out. We will be assisting kids with fishing, hopefully upping our scholarships to graduate students and assisting with some environmental and habitat projects. The Red Cedar dues are not a lot, but every little bit will help us out. If you haven't been to a meeting lately, please give it a try. If we have insulted you or are not meeting your needs call me at (517) 899-5608 or E-mail me r.buscetta@comcast.net and if possible we will try to rectify the situation. Remember, even if you decide not to pay dues, you are still welcome at our meetings.

Regards,

JB

Annual Banquet and Fundraiser By: Mark Johnson

As Jim mentioned in his President's Message the Banquet is scheduled for May 14th. We really need someone to volunteer to help with this event. Primarily to help coordinate selling the raffle tickets, and help set up the various Silent Auctions, Bucket Raf-

fles, Live Auctions and General Raffle. I am currently getting the donation request letters printed off and the mailing labels done from the mailing list and the board will get the donation letters out in the mail so you don't have to do that. If you could help out with this or

want more information on what is needed to be done first, please see a board member.

Keeping A Promise

By: Steven P. Arnoczky

The following article was published in the Fall 2012 issue of *The American Fly Fisher (The Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing)*. Reproduced with the permission of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

We are all taught as children that promises are to be kept, and heaven help the parent who promises their child something in a moment of weakness and later fails to deliver. Unfortunately, it seems that as we grow older, the implied obligation that accompanies a promise is often lost or simply ignored. Like the promise you make to your parents as a teenager when you tell them ‘that you’ll never ask for anything else”, if only they would just buy you the newest fad. Or the promise many of us have made in the wee hours of the morning, to no one in particular, while hugging the porcelain bowl, to ‘never drink alcohol again’. In these cases, nobody, not even the person making the promise, really believes that he or she will actually keep it. However, the promise you make to a dying friend is a sacred obligation and one that must be fulfilled. Such was the promise I made to my friend and mentor, Rich.

Rich had been my student mentor back in veterinary school in the early 70’s and was the person who introduced me to steelhead fishing in Michigan a decade later. Since that first outing Rich and I were able to spend many glorious hours together over the years on the Betsy, Two-Hearted, Little Manistee, and Pere Marquette rivers of Michigan in pursuit of steelhead. While we were never very successful (in terms of number of fish) during these outings, the

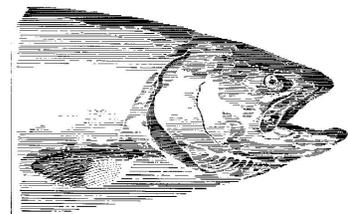
laughter and camaraderie we shared made every adventure memorable. As we grew older, the obligations and intrusions of life intervened and, as often happens with the best of friends, Rich and I lost touch for a while.

Then one day, some thirty years after our first fishing trip together, Rich called to tell me his heart was failing and that he was in ‘getting his affairs in order’. He said he wanted to see me again so he could give me something and a few days later we met for lunch. When I saw him it was hard to believe he was sick. His ever-present wry smile and easy-going manner belied the severity of his illness. We had a long visit re-living old fishing exploits and laughing at our past follies. It was a bittersweet afternoon but one I’ll never forget. When we got to Rich’s car, he reached into the backseat and pulled out a scratched and tarnished rod tube and handed it to me. It was his prized 8½ ft 9 wt bamboo fly rod. ‘I want you to have this’, he said. As we both held onto the rod tube, he looked me in the eye and continued, ‘but promise me that you will use it to catch a Michigan steelhead, that you’ll take it someplace exotic to fish, and that you will give it to a worthy fisherman when your fishing days are over.’ Now, I knew how much Rich loved this rod and I was deeply touched that he wanted me to have it. So, of course, I agreed to his request without hesitation. After a few personal words to each other, we said good-bye and awkwardly hugged each other the way guys do. The fact that I was at least a foot taller than Rich made it even more awkward and we both were still laughing at our clumsiness as he drove off. When I got home I put

the rod tube in a safe place and the promise in the back of my mind.

I was out of the country when Rich passed away a few months later. When I heard the news, my mind raced back to that day in the parking lot, the bamboo rod, and the promise. Soon after, I took out the rod and began casting it in the backyard. I had never cast a bamboo rod before and had no idea as to its capabilities or limitations. But the rod cast a 9wt line beautifully and I spent the better part of that afternoon thinking about Rich and trying to match my casting stroke to that demanded by the rod. Once I felt comfortable casting the rod, I began to think about the promise. Now, something you have to know about me is that I am a classic “worrier”. While Rich’s bamboo rod was skillfully crafted, it had only one tip. Rich had told me that he broke the other while unsuccessfully trying to keep a steelhead “out of the wood” on the Betsy River several years ago and hadn’t it used it again on steelhead for fear of shattering the remaining tip. So, instead of looking forward to planning the special steelhead trip, I began to worry about breaking the remaining rod tip trying to land a steelhead. It was a 40+ year old bamboo rod. Could it stand the pressure? Could I? Perhaps keeping this promise wouldn’t be as easy as I had thought.

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Keeping A Promise Continued By: Steven P. Arnoczky

Rich was a fly-fishing purist, so I knew to keep my promise I'd need to catch the steelhead on a fly, cast on a fly-line. None of the 'chuck and duck' technique I usually employed when fishing for steelhead would do. Therefore, I decided my best chance to fulfill these criteria would be to swing streamers on the Muskegon River. The Muskegon is a big, western style river that empties into Lake Michigan. It has excellent runs of salmon in the fall, and steelhead in the fall and spring. Fall is the best time for swinging flies for steelhead on the Muskegon so I booked a trip with Matt Zudweg who specializes in this type of fishing. Matt is a first class guide and as nice a person as you could ever meet. He had guided me and a friend on a salmon trip on the Muskegon the year before and we had a great day. So I knew I would be in good hands.

It was mid-November and a drier than usual fall, along with several preceding days of sunshine and bright blue skies, had slowed steelhead fishing on the Muskegon considerably. I had told Matt about my 'mission' when I booked the trip and as we left the boat launch he told me that he had been looking forward to this day and helping me keep my promise. He had already scouted a couple of potential 'hot spots' the day before and soon I was

swinging an egg sucking leach pattern through a promising stretch of water. While I fished, I told Matt stories about Rich and our friendship. As I began to recount one of our more memorable fishing escapes, a 'dime-bright' steelhead smashed the fly, came out of the water, and headed across the river. I managed to bring the fish next to the boat three times only to have it speed away when it saw the net. I was 'babying' the fish and I knew it, but I was scared of breaking the rod tip so I had backed off the drag on my reel. (See what I mean about 'worrying'.) After two more jumps, the hook dislodged and the fish was gone. My disappointment was obvious but Matt was undeterred. 'Not to worry,' he said, 'I've got a good feeling about today'.

Now we all know that guides must always exude a positive attitude to their clients, even under the most dire of circumstances. But I could tell that Matt was earnest in his words and, consequently, my confidence began to rise. Now I knew I was not under any time limit to fulfill my promise to Rich but I really wanted to accomplish a portion of it that day and so did Matt. A little further downstream Matt anchored at another promising spot. Before I cast he said, "Steve, this is a very good rod, it can handle a big fish. Tighten up the drag and let's get

one in the boat for Rich."

A few casts later as the fly reached the end of the swing, the line pulled tight and I set the hook on a beautiful male steelhead. I could almost hear Rich yelling "Fish on" as it blasted out of the water. The fish jumped a half dozen times with Matt cheering louder with each successive aerial display. With the drag set tighter and my increasing confidence in the sturdiness of the rod, the fish was soon in Matt's net. After a quick picture, Matt slipped the fish back into the current. As I sat down to catch my breath I thanked Matt for his help and, with a lump in my throat told him, 'That one was for Rich'. 'He knows', assured Matt, 'I am sure he knows'.

With a great sense of accomplishment and relief (that I hadn't broken the rod) I placed Rich's bamboo rod safely back in its tube. I fished the rest of the day with a newer graphite rod but did not have another hit. That, of course, is the way of steelheading. It is all about being at the right place, at the right time, with the right fly, and the right presentation. However, I can't help but think that today, it was a special rod from a special friend that made the difference.

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Keeping A Promise Continued By: Steven P. Arnoczky

As I drove home that night I started thinking about the next phase of my mission. 'Take it someplace exotic to fish,' Rich had told me. But where? Perhaps bonefishing on Andros Island or Belize? While I am not quite sure where I will be going, I do know that Rich's bamboo rod will be with me. After all, a promise is a promise.



Photo by Matt Zudweg

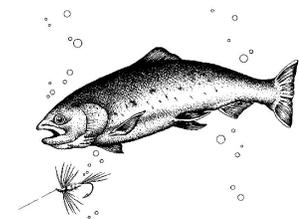
The rod, the fish, and the author (2010)

Quote of the Month

By: Mark Noel

"Our tradition is that of the first man who sneaked away to the creek when the tribe did not really need fish."

-- Roderick Haig Brown, *A River Never Sleeps*, 1946



Tie-A-Thon for Reel Recovery

By: Bob Bawden

Club members have met twice on Sunday tying nights at Piazano's restaurant to tie flies to contribute to the Reel Recovery project sponsored by the St. Joseph River Valley Fly Fishers, a Federation of Fly Fishers club. Reel Recovery is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of men dealing with cancer. The RCFF board committed to tie 100 size 10 wooly buggers, 100 size 12 gold ribbed hare's ear and 100 size 14 parachute adams. The club is supplying the materials for these flies at the tying nights at Piazano's. After two tying nights, we have 76 wooly buggers of various colors, 40 hares ears and 40 parachute adams. We have dedicated 3 more tying nights for completion of the flies and we hope to continue to have good turnouts. However, we are asking members who can't make the tying nights to try to tie a half dozen or more of one of these flies and give them to a board member at the February club meeting. It would really be great if our club could contribute more than the 100 flies.

New Meeting Location

Red Cedar Fly Fishers-Meeting Venue February to June 2013. RCFE will be meeting in Room I of the Natural Resources Building, corner of Farm Lane and Trowbridge Road from 6:30pm to 9:00pm.

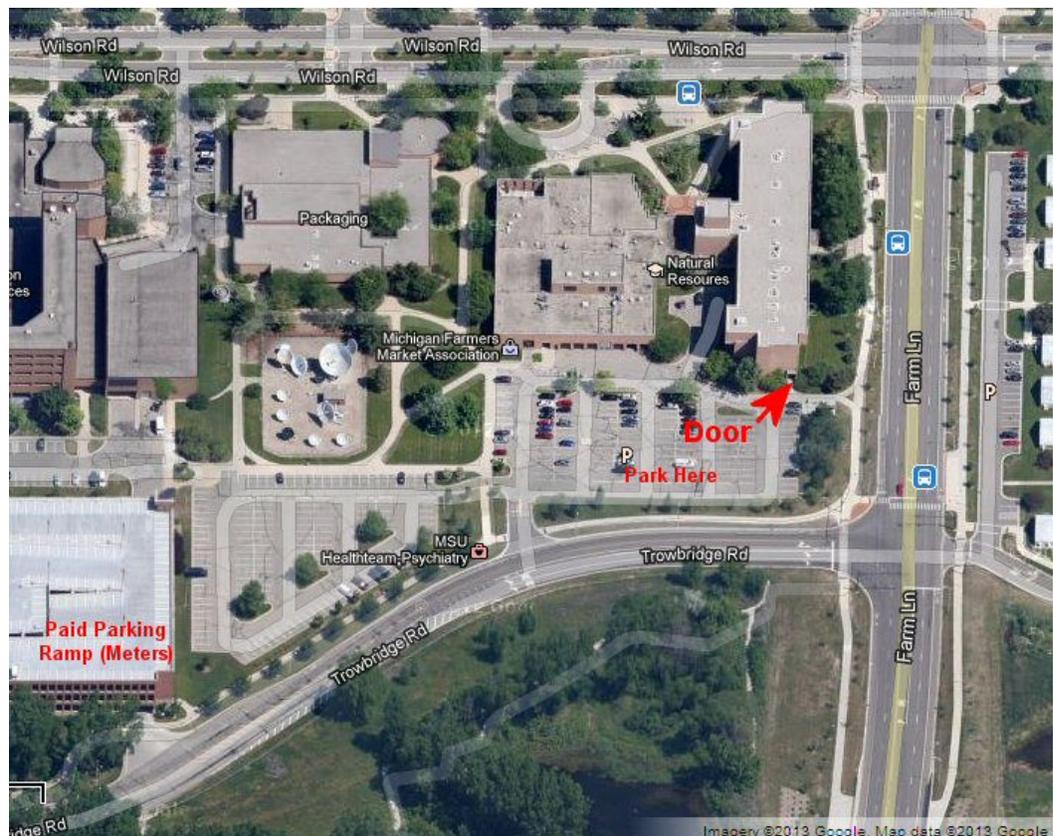
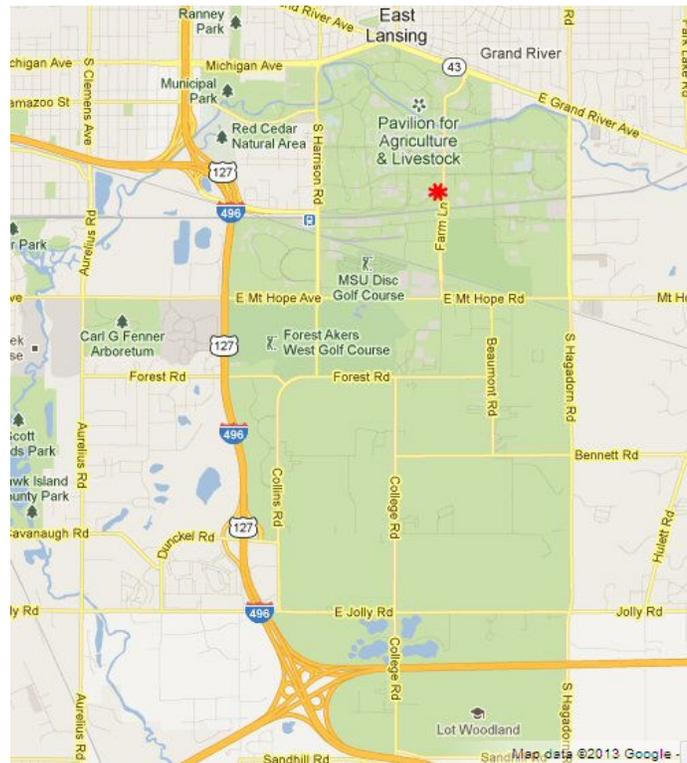
The parking lot is gated, however after 6:00pm the boom should be up.

Use the door shown.

Go down the stairs and through the doors

Room I is about half-way along the hall near an exit sign.

By: Neil Gross



**RED CEDAR FLY
FISHERS**

P.O. Box 129
Okemos, MI 48805

www.redcedarflyfishers.org

Below are a few pictures from our recent Cub Scout Fly Tying night.



Refrigerator Reminders

February

12th: RCFF Meeting, MSU Natural Resources Building, Room I 6:30pm.

17th: Sunday Tying Night at Piazano's on Grand River in the Downstairs Banquet Room. 6:30pm to 8:30pm

March

2nd: Quiet Water Symposium, MSU Pavillion

3rd: Sunday Tying Night at Piazano's on Grand River in the Downstairs Banquet Room. 6:30pm to 8:30pm

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